

SPECIAL OPERATIONS SURGICAL TEAM APPLICATION—FY 2018



Application Deadlines:

Fall Assessment: 01 Sept 2017

Spring Assessment: 01 Feb 2018

Submit Applications to: 24SOWSTTS.Assessments.RAS@us.af.mil

For general questions: 720OSS.SOST.Orgbox@us.af.mil

“Quis Illos Bellatores Custodiet”

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Special Operations Surgical Team Assessment

1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the Special Operations Surgical Teams (SOST). This document outlines the application procedures for becoming a SOST member. SOST is under the 24th Special Operations Wing (SOW), which falls under Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC). There is also a team under the 352nd Special Operations Wing, which falls under Special Operations Command Europe. For more information on our teams, you can visit www.24sow.af.mil. Applicants should review this document thoroughly because it has undergone significant revision.

2. CAREER FIELD ELIGIBILITY

SOST requires high levels of physical fitness, mental agility, professionalism, leadership, interpersonal skills, initiative, psychological stability, motivation, and technical competency. Additional eligibility criteria are below:

- Security clearance: Secret (minimum), Top Secret eligible
- Retention: Four years (SOST candidates will incur a four year controlled-tour commitment upon completion of training pipeline)
- Hold a qualifying SOST AFSC/Skill level: 45S3, 44E3A, 46Y3M, 45A3, 46N3E, 4N171, 4H071 or sister service equivalent for officer positions only
- Enlisted candidates: Minimum grade of E-5 with 7-level qualifications (or able to attain within 6 months of selection)
- Officer candidates: Minimum grade of O-3
- Background: Outstanding resume and no negative personal or professional history
- Medical/Physical: IFC III Flying Physical (SWIC) as outlined in this package
- Physical Fitness: At a minimum, candidates must satisfactorily complete the minimum scores on the PT Evaluation and have scored at least a 90% on their last AF Fitness Test.
- Must hold or be able to meet appropriate licenses and credentials for Florida, Alabama, or Nevada
- Eligible to PCS within 12 months of selection

3. SOST APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Two SOST Assessments occur each year. Each cycle has two phases: Phase I and Phase II. In Phase I, a panel of officers reviews and stratifies applications submitted by the deadline. The top applicants are invited to attend Phase II Selection. Phase II consists of a 4-day evaluation conducted at Hurlburt Field, FL. Active duty candidates must attend Phase II in TDY status. AFSOC will in most cases fund Phase II attendance for active duty candidates.

Upon completion of Phase II evaluated events, the 720 OSS/CC will make his selection of new SOST personnel. Applicants are briefed on their select/non-select status upon completing Phase II. The schedule for the two selection cycles is as follows:

Phase I applications due to ST Assessment Director: 1 June

Phase II: mid-July

Phase I applications due to ST Assessment Director: 1 December

Phase II: mid-January

These schedules may change depending on SOST needs and available resources. Receiving an invitation to Phase II means the Phase I selection board would like to take a closer look at your potential of joining SOST. Your decision to attend is voluntary and non-binding. Phase II selection means the selection board president has approved your entry into SOST and pipeline training. It is ultimately up to you to accept the challenge.

Active Duty AF: Any active duty AF members (officers and enlisted) may apply as long as they meet the eligibility requirements stated above.

Inter-service Transfers: Officers in other services seeking to apply for SOST should reference AFI 36-2004 *Inter-service Transfer of Officer to the United States Air Force (USAF) and the United States Air Force Reserve (USAFR)*. You should submit your SOST application to the Phase I selection board before an approved service transfer. However, you must include in your application a letter from your commander

supporting this transfer in lieu of career field releasability by an AFPC functional manager. Bear in mind that selection at Phase II does not guarantee an approved inter-service transfer, the processes are independent of each other. It is highly recommended that this process be started at least six months prior to Phase II due to the time required to complete a transfer. For additional information, contact the Appointed Assessment Director. **Note:** At this time, enlisted transfers are not accepted.

First-Time Non-Selects: Candidates who attend Phase II, but are not selected, are not guaranteed a Phase II invitation in future selection cycles. If the SOST cadres identify deficiencies/weaknesses that they would like to see corrected before accepting you into the SOF community, you must submit an updated application that addresses those deficiencies. You may elect to use the same recommendation letter, but all other information must be updated appropriately and you must accomplish a new PT test.

Individual Mobility Augmentee (IMA): IMAs are authorized to submit an application. Upon selection they will remain IMAs and attend training and deploy in IMA status.

4. **PHASE I**

Phase I applications are due by the date posted on the top of each cycle's application. The appointed Assessment Director does an initial review of the applications for completeness and gives them to the Battlefield Airman Clinic for a medical review. The Assessment Director convenes a review board consisting of current SOST personnel. The board ranks the applications, identifying the candidates most likely to succeed. The selection board has final authority to invite applicants. Once invitations are sent, the Assessment Director contacts the individuals with Phase II reporting instructions.

The appointed Assessment Director designates the candidate team leader. At that time, the team is encouraged to begin team building via email and other means. The more cohesive the team is prior to arrival, the better the team interaction will be during Phase II which enhances everyone's selection chances. The team leader is the primary means of contacting the ST Assessment Director for assessment-related matters. The appointed Assessment Director is your definitive resource for all policy, continuity, and information on Phase II.

Applications from candidates are stored for Phase II cadre to gain an initial impression of the team members. All non-invited applicants may request feedback on their applications from the ST Assessment Director. If you do not hear from the Assessment Director within 45 days of submitting your application, contact him/her for details.

Read through ANNEX A for complete instructions and guidance on constructing your Phase I package.

5. **PHASE II**

Phase II Selection occurs at Hurlburt Field, FL. The purpose of Phase II is to assess each candidate in the nine SOF attributes: Physical Fitness, Mental Agility, Professionalism, Leadership, Interpersonal Skills, Initiative, Psychological Stability, Motivation, and Technical Competency for determining if you have the raw skills to operate in the Special Operations environment. Your ability to be a team member and your individual performance are evaluated. The schedule is designed to stress you. The Assessment Cadre will observe and take notes on everything you do. These observations will be the basis for a hiring recommendation made to the Senior Ranking Officer (SRO). The data will also be used to provide critical feedback to enhance your personal and professional growth.

Candidates must prepare for a physically and mentally trying time. You cannot trust your judgment of your physical and mental preparedness prior to coming to Phase II. Feedback from most candidates indicates that this week is more demanding than anything they anticipated. The cadre will push you physically and mentally beyond your comfort zone to assess those critical attributes in adverse situations. You will be expected to perform to the best of your ability in all events.

Billeting will be coordinated for all candidates. Candidates will be billeted together for the duration of Phase II. The candidate team leader is responsible for passing travel and contact information for all candidates. The first person to check in will be responsible for facilitating the in-processing of additional candidates. When the candidate team leader arrives, he must check in with the Assessment Director for further instructions.

There are four ways to be dismissed during Phase II. 1) **Failure to pass the PT Evaluation** during Phase II is grounds for immediate dismissal. 2) **Medical disqualification** results from a medical assessment determining

your inability to continue safely through Phase II. 3) **Self-Initiated Elimination (SIE)** means that you no longer wish to continue in the assessment. Additionally, 4) **Quitting by Action (QBA)** is a Phase II policy that allows the Phase II cadre to give you three consecutive warnings during an assessment event, for demonstrating lack of motivation to continue or perform at the required level of effort. If a fourth warning is issued, you are subject to removal from the assessment. If a candidate SIE's or QBA's, he will not be considered again for assessment.

Candidates should prepare for the following:

- Extensive psychological testing and interviews
- Briefing and writing skills evaluations
- Problem solving events
- Leadership ability evaluations
- Tactical/field medical care scenarios
- Potential for ruck marching distances over 4 miles at a 15:00 min/mile pace with 45 pounds of weight
- Potential for running distances up to 3 miles at an 8:00 min/mile pace
- Calisthenics sessions of various exercises
- Water confidence evaluations, to include:
 - o Under water swim 15 yards
 - o Treading for 10 min
 - o Surface swimming in uniform

Those candidates who successfully complete and are selected during Phase II can expect PCS/TDY enroute orders to Hurlburt Field or another Operating Location. PCS timeframe will be coordinated with the losing command via AFPC. The Assessment Director will work with you throughout this process.

After you PCS, you will maintain a physical training regimen and complete various in-house training between pipeline schools. This designed arrangement will enhance your awareness of Special Tactics missions, maintain your motivation, and foster professional development as a SOST member. After the Training Office schedules your pipeline sequence, you will enter the training pipeline. You will return to Hurlburt Field or your assigned operating location after each school.

ANNEX A

SOST Phase I Application Instructions & Example

PHASE I APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Proof read your application for accuracy, format, grammar, and spelling. In Phase I, the selection board relies solely on information and impressions made through your application. Incomplete or poorly crafted applications are a reflection of the applicant's professionalism. As a rule, successful Phase I applications are concise, easy to understand, and are not filled with extra "fluff." Your success in the SOF community begins with this application.

The application will include the following in this order:

1. Cover page – Use Times New Roman and Font size 10.
2. Personal Narrative – One page in length (See example for format and specifics).
3. One page résumé – emphasize leadership experience (See example for format).
4. One signed recommendation letter from your commander or residency director, no more than one-page in length. The letter should comment on your medical and leadership abilities including relevant examples.
5. Copies of the three most recent performance or training reports, etc. If your time in service is too short to have three reports, include what is available.
6. A signed statement documenting sister service release (if applicable).
7. A signed statement documenting the medical facility and date of your most recent physical examination. In the case that you are not able to attain an IFC III physical, this statement should include any known medical issues that would preclude the approval of an IFC III physical or would require a waiver. There is no need to be specific in this statement for HIPPA reasons.

Every effort should be made to accomplish an IFC III Physical Examination (Special Warfare Instruction Center, SWIC) prior to applying to Phase I. If this is not possible, include details of the type of examination administered. Include the name and contact information of the Flight Surgeon (or sister service equivalent) that accomplished the examination. You may attend Phase II with an incomplete IFC III physical; however, your selection at Phase II will be contingent upon its completion and certification. Do not include any portion of your medical records or any privileged medical information in your application. The Battlefield Airman Clinic (BFAC) will review your records electronically, if possible. If host base Force Health/Flight Medicine is unfamiliar with SWIC physical procedures, have them contact Hurlburt Field Battlefield Airman Clinic at DSN 579-3702 (Comm: 850-884-3702) for assistance.

When complete, your application should be scanned into a PDF file as ONE DOCUMENT, and sent via signed official email (.gov or .mil) to 720.OSS.SOST.orgbox@us.af.mil. Put your last name and "SOST Application" separated by a hyphen in the subject line of the email, such as "Johnson-SOST Application."

Additional Considerations:

- Letter of Recommendation will be formatted according to AFH 33-337 The Tongue and Quill or sister service equivalent.
- Training reports for active duty members are already formatted using an Air Force or sister service form.
- For the "Approval for Release," you should have a signed statement releasing you from Sister-Service (first O-6 in the chain).
- A signed memorandum for record IAW AFH 33-337 documenting the medical facility and date of your most recent physical examination, as described in first page of Annex A.
- When submitting your application, insert the appropriate FOUO statement at the beginning portion of

the e-mail traffic. Example: “The information herein is For Official Use Only (FOUO) which must be protected under the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended. Unauthorized disclosure or misuse of this PERSONAL INFORMATION may result in criminal and/or civil penalties.”

- If you have additional questions contact: 720.OSS.SOST.orgbox@us.af.mil

Notes regarding following examples:

- The format on the next pages is not an option. Follow the example. Do not include the footer you see below that says: “Current as of 28 Feb 16”. Page numbers are not needed.
- If the header or section does not apply to your situation, simply delete that section.
- Be sure that all signature blocks are signed digitally or with wet ink.

Rank/Name: Capt John Smith**SSN:** 123-45-6789**Work Address:** 123 Main Street, Hurlburt Field, FL 32544**Email:** john.smith@eglin.af.mil**Phone:** 850-555-1234**Duty Title:** General Surgeon**Branch of Service:** USAF **AFSC/MOS:** 21A1**Commissioning Source/Date:** COT/May 2010**Cumulative GPA:** 3.2 **Major:** B.S. Biology**INSERT YOUR PHOTO HERE.**

The photo should be a forward facing portrait against a solid colored background. You should be in service dress and the photo should extend from the bottom of your name tag/bottom of your ribbon rack to the top of your head.

If an official photo lab is not available, use a digital camera and stand against a white wall with nothing in the background.

Attended Phase II / SOCOM Training: Yes / No **If yes, when:** (Month, Year)**Commander Name/Rank:** Lt Col John A. Doe**Email/Phone:** john.doe@eglin.af.mil / 850-678-1234**Functional Manager Name/Rank:** Lt Col Jane Doe**Email/Phone:** jane.doe@lackland.af.mil / 850-789-3456**PT Test Results****PT Test Date:****Sit-ups**____ **Push-ups**____**1.5 Mile run** ____mins____secs **Last AF PT Test Score**____**Candidate can complete 15 meter underwater and can swim 250 meters without stopping (Yes/No)****Administrator Name/Rank:****Contact (Email/Phone):****Administrator Signature**_____

Candidate acknowledgment statement: "I, (Insert Name Here), hereby apply to become a Special Operations Surgical Team member and volunteer to perform the duties inherent to Special Operations. I acknowledge that I can be removed from further assessment for any of the following reasons: 1) quitting through words or actions, 2) becoming a medical or safety risk, 3) committing an integrity violation such as lying, cheating, or stealing, or 4) failing to meet specified fitness standards. I further acknowledge that upon graduation of training, I will incur a four-year active controlled-tour commitment. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application is true."

Candidate Signature:_____ **Date:**_____

MEMORANDUM FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS SURGICAL TEAM SELECTION BOARD

FROM: 96 MDG/SGOS

SUBJECT: Personal Narrative

1. This document is provided to give the selection board an overall understanding of your character and personality. It should be clear, concise, and free of extra “fluff” statements.

It should include:

1. Your personal background, such as where you grew up, significant jobs/positions held, and/or an explanation of your experiences and involvements before and during military service
2. An identification and explanation of your perceived strengths and weaknesses
3. A discussion on what attracts you to joining the Special Operations Surgical Team
4. Why the Special Operations Surgical Team is the right place for you

2. The narrative will be formatted with 1-inch margins on the left and right sides. The top margin will be between 1 inch and 1.5 inches depending on the heading, you establish. The bottom will be 1 inch and will include the Special Operations Surgical Team motto: “*Quis Illos Bellatores Custodiet.*”

3. The heading format you see above should be followed with your own information entered in the FROM portion. The document may not exceed more than one page in length. Use Times New Roman with font size 12. Include a crest in the upper left hand corner of your header similar to an official memorandum for record. See AFH 33-337 *The Tongue and Quill* or sister service equivalent for examples of an Official Memorandum for Record.

John Smith

JOHN SMITH, Capt, USAF, MC
General Surgeon

PERSONAL RESUME

John Smith
Capt, USAF

SSAN: XXX-XX-XXXX
DOB: XX DEC XX
AGE: XX

SERVICE HISTORY

Aug 10 – Present

General Surgeon, 96 MDG, Eglin AFB, FL. Specific description of position and duties assigned....

Jan 10 – May 10

NCOIC, Operating Room, 96 MDG, Eglin AFB, FL. Specific description of position and duties assigned....

EDUCATION

M.D	USUHS	2012
B.S. Biology	University of Michigan	2008
A.A.S. Surgical Services	Community College of the Air Force	2002

PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (If applicable)

Squadron Officer School	2010
Airmanship Basic Course	2007

CERTIFICATION/AWARDS/MILITARY AND MEDICAL TRAINING

USAFA Distinguished Graduate
EMT Basic Certification
USAF NCOA Distinguished Graduate

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Air Force Sergeants Association
American Medical Association

PERSONAL INTERESTS

Surfing, rock climbing, fly-fishing, off-roading

ANNEX B

SOST Physical Training EVALUATION STANDARDS

General. All SOST applicants shall complete the physical training test in accordance with these procedures as part of the SOST application. This test is based off of the Special Tactics operator physical training standards/evaluation test described in AFI 13-219V2, *Combat Control and Special Tactics Operator Standardization and Evaluation*. Portions of the PT Evaluation have been modified to better reflect SOST requirements.

Standards. You must complete the minimum number of exercises, run, and swim within the times specified below. SOST selection is extremely competitive; you should give your very best effort, which should be well beyond the minimums. When you submit your application, your PT Eval should have been accomplished within three months of the Phase I due date, and as close to Phase I as possible to reflect your current level of fitness.

CALISTHENICS: sit-ups, push-ups -- exercise to time limit or until muscle failure

- Minimums:
 Sit-ups: 39
 Push-ups: 27

RUN: 1.5 miles non-stop

- Maximum:
 14:00 min

UNDERWATER SWIM: swim and remain underwater for 15 yard

- Minimum:
 Successful completion

SWIM: 250 meters non-stop -- any stroke except backstroke (no fins)

- Minimum:
 Successful completion

Administration: The PT test must be given in the order listed and completed within a three-hour timeframe. If you are unable to meet any of the minimums, you have failed the test. Your supervisor, such as the unit PT manager, should administer the PT test. Other test administrators are considered on a case-by-case basis, following coordination with the Assessment Director. If you fail to execute the proper form, the test administrator will correct you, and the incorrect repetition will not count. The test administrator will document the results on the cover sheet of your application and sign in the appropriate space.

Procedures: Calisthenics events will be tested one right after the other with approximately a 2-minute time lapse between events. Upon completion of the calisthenics events, a 10-minute rest period is given prior to starting the 1.5-mile run. Upon completion of the 1.5-mile run, a 20-minute rest period is given prior to starting the underwater swim. There will be a five (5) minute break after the underwater swim, before beginning the 250-meter swim.

- **Sit-ups (one-minute time limit):** Starting Position. The use of a mat is optional. The member will be instructed to lie face up on the floor/mat. In the starting position, the member's feet may extend off the mat, but the buttocks, shoulders, and head must not extend beyond the mat. The member's knees will be bent at a 90 degree angle (throughout the assessment), with the feet or heels in contact with the floor at all times. The member's arms will be crossed over the chest with the hands/fingers on the shoulders or resting on the upper chest. A complete sit-up is accomplished when the upper torso of the member is raised off the floor/mat, the elbows touch the knees or thighs, and the upper torso is lowered back to the floor/mat until the shoulder blades touch the floor/mat. Elbows must touch the knees or thighs at the top of the sit-up, and the shoulder blades must touch the floor/mat at the bottom of the sit-up. Any part of your hands/fingers must remain in contact with your shoulders/upper chest at all times. Incorrect sit-ups (e.g., elbows do not

touch the knees or thighs at the top of the sit-up, shoulder blades do not touch the floor/mat at the bottom of the sit-up, hands/fingers lift completely off the shoulders/upper chest, etc.) will not be counted. If an incorrect sit-up is performed, assessor will repeat the number of the last correct sit-up and explain what is being done incorrectly. The member may only rest in the up position. If the member rests in the down position or holds onto their knees/legs while in the up position, the sit-up component of the assessment will be terminated. A two-minute rest follows this event.

- **Push-ups (one-minute time limit):** From the starting position (elbows extended), the member will lower the body to the ground until the upper arm is at least parallel to the floor (elbow bent at least 90 degrees or less) before pushing back up to the starting position (the chest may touch but not rest on or bounce off the floor). The member completes one full push-up after returning to the starting position with elbows fully extended. It is important to monitor the member's form and make sure the body does not bow at the waist as the member tires. The body must remain rigid during the assessment (the back must remain straight unless resting). Incorrect push-ups (e.g., member does not lower body until upper arm is at least parallel to the floor, member does not fully extend elbows when returning to starting position, body bows at the waist, etc.) will not be counted. If an incorrect push-up is performed, assessor will repeat the number of the last correct push-up and explain what is being done incorrectly. Member may rest in the up position only. If member rests in the down position with their body on the ground, the push-up component of the test will be terminated. A ten-minute rest follows this event.
- **1.5 Mile Run:** Performed with running shoes and running shorts. This run must be continuous (non-stop). If a candidate stops anytime during the run, the test is terminated and a failure is entered for the entire test. The test is conducted on a measured running track. Designed to measure aerobic endurance used when performing mission tasks, specifically employment or evasion situations. This event is followed by a 20-minute rest period prior to the underwater swim.
- **Underwater Swim Test:** The 15 yard underwater swim will be performed with swim trunks and mask or goggles. Enter the pool feet first and swim 15 yards, while keeping their face submerged and/or not taking a breath. It should be completed without the candidate surfacing or breaking the water surface during any portion of the swim. If violated, the test will be terminated and considered a failure for the entire test. Swimsuits and swim goggles are the only equipment items allowed. Allow a 5-minute rest period prior to the 250-meter swim. Candidates should carefully stretch for the swim during this break time.
- **250 Meter Swim:** The swim will be performed with swim trunks and mask or goggles in a lap pool. Note this is a 250-meter swim and not 250 yards. This swim must be continuous (non-stop). If you stop anytime during the swim, the test is terminated and a failure is entered for the entire test. This exercise is to measure aerobic endurance in a maritime environment.